

TJC Touchstone

Spring 1989



The TJC Touchstone Magazine

Welcomes

Submissions

in

Art, Photography, and Literature

For Its

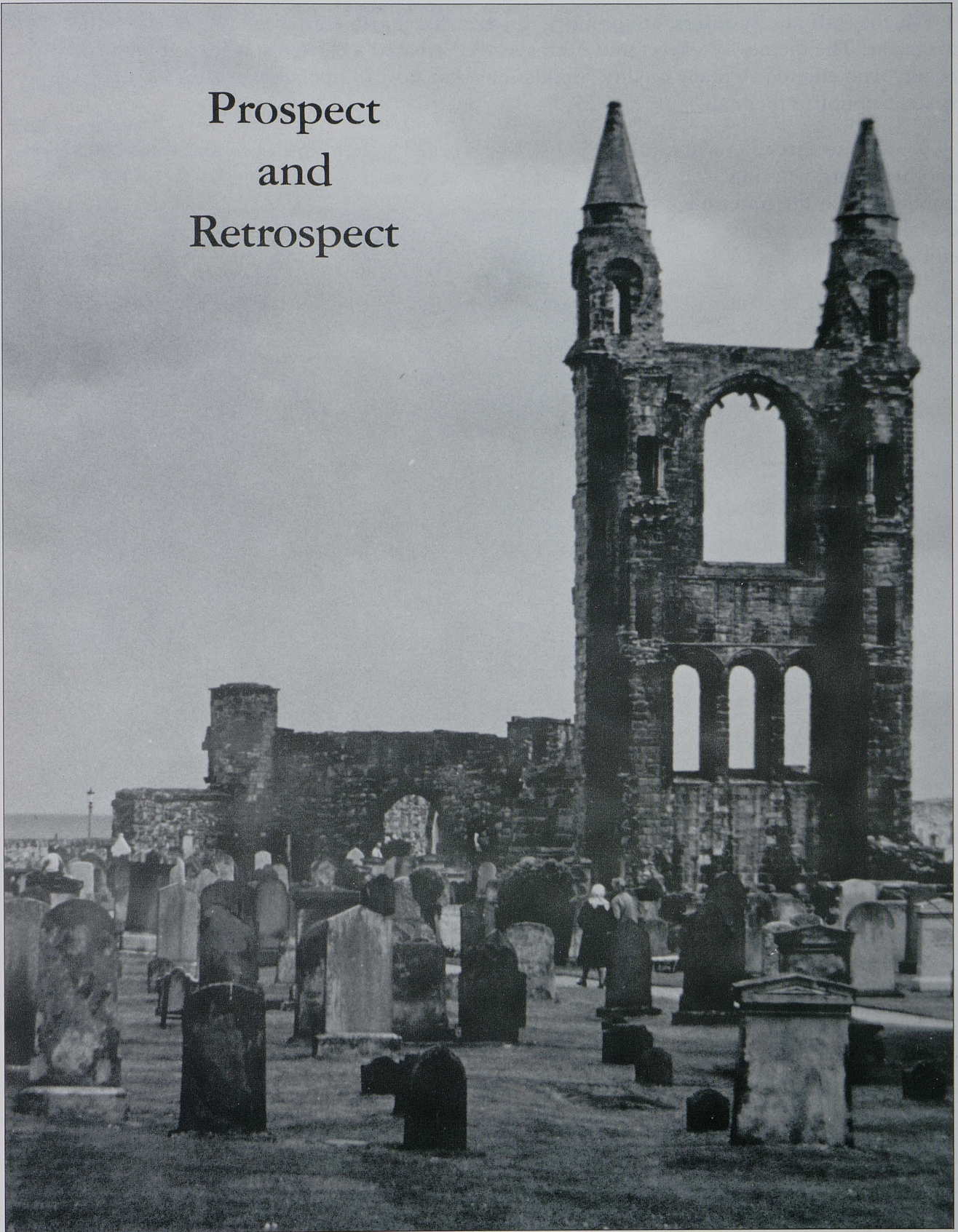
1989-1990 Edition

Theme: Sunlight and Shadows

Any person currently enrolled in a class or any person currently employed by Tyler Junior College may submit work for consideration. All entries must fit the theme. Guidelines for submissions may be obtained in the Humanities and Social Sciences office, Jenkins Hall, Room 104, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Submissions will be accepted from August 4, 1989 through January 26, 1990.

If you are interested in being a staff member for the TJC Touchstone magazine for the "Sunlight and Shadows" edition, please leave your name, address, phone number, and social security number in the box on the door of Office V, Potter Hall, Tyler Junior College; or, contact the magazine's sponsors: Gloria Peggram, Judy Turman, and Noamie Byrum.

Prospect
and
Retrospect



THE OLD CHURCH by Charles Sowders

Foreword

We, the staff and sponsors, are proud to present this fourth edition of *TJC Touchstone* magazine. The theme, "Prospect and Retrospect" presented a challenge met by students and faculty who entered so many quality submissions that it was impossible, within the available space, to publish them all.

We wish to extend our gratitude to those who worked so hard to insure that this would be yet another award-winning publication in the tradition established by previous editions.

Johnny E. Rush
Editor-in-chief

Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, sprang full blown from the head of Zeus, waving a spear and shouting a war cry. Surely that cry was "Join the Tribe with pride!" said Phi Theta Kappa President Jason Spencer. As goddess of war she won a blue-ribbon for the PTK homecoming display. As goddess of wisdom she will preside over future PTK banquets. The sculpture was created by art majors Joanne Simmer and Suzanne Burris, and the picture composed by graphic arts major Amy Davis, all members of Alpha Omicron chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the national junior college honor fraternity.



ATHENA, GODDESS OF WISDOM/WAR by Amy Davis

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About the title:

A distinctive streak left on a black touchstone when rubbed with genuine silver or gold was a foolproof test which allowed ancient civilizations to trust using coins in trade. We trust that you, too, will find genuine distinctive elements of value in the *TJC Touchstone*.

Carolyn Hendon
 March 1986

Contents

- 1 The Old Church *Charles Sowders*
- 2 Athena, Goddess of Wisdom/War *Sculpture by Suzanne Burris and Joanne L. Simmer*
Photo by Amy Davis
- 3 Staff
 Contents
- 4 Loss *Sheryl Spivey*
 Good Ole Wagon *Charles Sowders*
- 5 The Funeral *Pat P. Logan*
 Living: Prospect Through Retrospect *Meredith L. Watters*
- 6 Thank You for the Rainy Days *G. Paul Ray*
- 8 Rainy Days *Dorte Holm Larsen*
- 9 Walking in the Rain *Erica L. Watson*
 Tranquil Treasures *Carol Maddox*
- 10 Friends *Sheryl Spivey*
 Old Home Place *Trina Stiefer*
- 11 Tortured Emotions *Lois Ann Massey*
 Memories of Grandmother *Lora Robbins*
- 12 A Familiar Path *Erica L. Watson*
 Grandmother's Porch *Cynthia D. Price*
- 13 untitled *Michael Sanders*
 Let Me Follow You *Connie Purtle*
- 14 The Man *David Nunn*
 Movement in the Night *G. Paul Ray*
- 15 Time in Flight *Lois Ann Massey*
 What Tomorrow Brings *Dwain E. Stroud*
- 16 The Sea *John David Feagin*
 Reflective Thoughts of a Middle-Aged Woman *Mary Chartiér*
- 17 The Warmth of the Past *Mary Chartiér*
- 18 Small Shoes *Tamrah Southwell*
- 19 Our Baby *Brenda Jordan*
 A Future Prospective *Patsy Fowzer*
- 20 Tomorrow's Dream *Donna Dené Kimbrell*
 Race Day: The Prospect of Winning *Meredith L. Watters*
- 21 mental ballet *darrin a. lamorte*
- 22 Have I Got a Deal for You *Patsy Fowzer*
 The Perfect Life *Linda Abel*
- 24 Look at Me *Anna Argemí Carson*
 New Seeds *Linda Abel*
- 25 Dogwood *John David Feagin*
- 26 Rose *Angela Britt*
 autumn haiku *Kristen Nelson*
 winter haiku *Lynda Brownlee*
 daylily haiku *Julia Stephens*
 hyacinth haiku *Carolyn Hendon*
 star haiku *James F. Barnes*
- 27 Ode to Shakespeare *Catherine L. Starkey*
 Coming of Age *Johnny E. Rush*
- 28 Guilty by Association *Catherine L. Starkey*
- 29 Beyond the Door *Erica L. Watson*
- 30 Timeless *Tamrah Southwell*
 Turn Another Page *Heath Huffstetter*
- 31 When I Look to the Future *Stacy Pinson*
- 32 parched haiku *Catherine L. Starkey*
 Mesa Verde *Charles Sowders*
- 33 Summer Sunset *Judy Barnes*
 Egypt: Ancient and Eternal *Charline Wallis*
- 34 Windmills of the Past *Pamela Calvert*
 Stars of Life *Dwain E. Stroud*
 Crystalline *Connie Purtle*
- 35 Think About It *Sheryl Spivey*
 The Continuity of Change *Betty J. Hobbs*
- 36 The Little Secret *Dorte Holm Larsen*
 untitled *David Nunn*
 Epcot *Charles Sowders*
 Cover photo *CREEPING ALONG* *Brenda Jordan*

Loss

by Sheryl Spivey

What is a loss to you?
Is it something that is gone forever?
Loss is pain, sorrow and hurt.
It is not choosey or drawn out.
It hits you and covers your body and soul.
It dwells in the hearts of many.
Loss takes time to mend and more time to accept.
When you lose someone close to you the world, for a
short time, becomes dark.
Mourning is the saddest of all words.
You can learn about yourself when you lose someone.
You grow hard and strong.
Loss must be put aside but never forgotten.



GOOD OLE WAGON by Charles Sowders

The Funeral

by Pat P. Logan

Behind the fragrance of the wreath
Death's odor lurks. And though we veil
Our desperate hurt beneath
A prayer, a psalm, we still bewail
That lifeless cargo filling funeral box.

But lo, here comes the hope we search,
The power to blot out the tomb—
A pregnant woman arrives at church.
The grave is full? So is the womb.
The Lord who takes gives back: a paradox.

Living: Prospect Through Retrospect

by Meredith L. Watters

Life is like a chain reaction, people touching people, who touch other people, and so on. I think of one man particularly who was instrumental in many lives, without forethought or reservation. This man was a traveling salesman who traveled the backroads of rural areas to sell his goods in hopes of supporting his family. Not only did his travels support his family, they also presented him the opportunity to touch several lives.

But, as the man got older, he began to look at life like a dead end road and his steps down the road began to shorten. He did not want to reach that inevitable ending. Finally, he stopped moving forward altogether, his spirit covered over with the dust of fear.

He had forgotten how many lives had been touched by him. There was the woman and her children who had been trapped in a car which had been wrapped around a tree during a rainstorm. Had he not stopped to help, would the lives of the woman and her children be

the same today? And what of their influence on friends and family members? The prospect is awesome.

What about the car full of teenagers who had run into a telephone pole one wet, rainy evening? This man was the first to render aid and comfort to these helpless, injured victims.

Then, there was a very special Christmas, when this man took measures to see that a family would have a *special* day, even though the father had been paralyzed from a car accident. From arranging for transportation and preparing the house for the father's visit, to preparing the meal and giving gifts, the man gave of himself selflessly and touched lives.

Not all his experiences involved tragedy though. There was the time the man was driving down the road toward home and stopped to pick up a lost dog. It turned out to be a hunting dog which had been lost but was returned, thoughtfully, to its distraught owner, with no acceptance of reward other than a

thank you. And what of the lives touched through this man's charity work and Sunday school lessons to young adults?

Through his life, the man gave of himself and touched many people, but somewhere along the line, he stopped remembering those times and quickly felt the fear of the future. But what is there to fear of the future? By taking a different path or finding the crossroad at the end of one road, a person can continue to move forward and grow. Just as the cotton field which must be plowed and seeded, and nurtured by sun and rain to prevent decay, a man's soul must also be nurtured to prevent erosion.

The seed of life is the soul, from which the prospect for the future lies. To nurture the soul is to prevent erosion by remembering the past, and those whose lives have been touched by one's presence on this earth. Then, one must look to the future and those lives still to be touched. My father finally did.

Thank You for the Rainy Days

by G. Paul Ray

The letter remained unopened.

William sat at his window with the letter on the desk before him. It wasn't a particularly cold day, however, there were gray skies and there was a light mist outside. He gazed blankly out the window. The silence was broken only by the constant droning noise of the falling rain and an occasional barking dog in the distance.

It has been three long weeks since William had received the unopened letter that lay before him. The upper left corner on the front of the envelope simply said "Phillip." There was no return address.

William and Phillip had met when they were both 13. By chance, they both happened to attend a Saturday evening movie at the local theater. The show was "Friday the 13th." William had spend the last hour, and indeed almost the entire last month, reflecting on their meeting and how they had been through so much together, including indefinite sequels to the movie, which they always attended together for "old time's sake."

But, Phillip was gone now. He was in an automobile accident a little less than four weeks ago.

The two of them had often corresponded in order to keep up with each other's lives. They had worked through many tough times together by encouraging one another, lifting each other up and offering advice. Now, there was one left to cope with his problems alone in the wake of a tragedy that claimed the other's life.

William had dealt with incredible disbelief and shock since he received the call from Phillip's parents in Portland. He had been waiting all weekend for Phillip to arrive at his apartment. When Phillip didn't show, William

assumed he had decided not to come because of the weather.

The call came at 11:30 Sunday night. Phillip's mother asked William to speak at the funeral, if he felt he could, and to be a pallbearer. That night William didn't sleep, but that didn't stop the nightmares from haunting him. He blamed himself by believing that if Phillip hadn't been coming to see him the wreck never would've happened. He also regretted that *he* hadn't planned to drive to Phillip's for the weekend.

After wrestling his thoughts all night, he drove into Dallas the next morning. The drive was typically less than two hours, and though the clock in William's dashboard showed that two hours was all the time that had passed, it seemed much longer. He had thought of every fun time they had spent with one another. He recalled every laugh they had shared. And he regretted every argument he had caused between them.

There were many puddles along the Interstate that told of the rains the night before. Rain had haunted Phillip all of his life. Phillip's mother had always forced him to stay inside during rainy days. At first, when he was older, he did it for his mother's sake, because she so strongly equated the rain with death. He knew if he insisted on leaving that she would sit up and worry constantly about what was happening or what could happen to him.

He was eventually conditioned to fear the rain himself. But, William had done his best to dispel Phillip's paranoia, and he felt some responsibility for Phillip's death because of that. Under normal circumstances, Phillip would never have considered making the drive in the rainy weather. However, with

recent prodding from William, he had come to confront his anxieties, only to be killed by them.

William was withdrawn for some time. He hardly spoke to anyone on the flight to Oregon. He was angry with Phillip for having had the obsession with rain. Phillip had told William before that he felt it would be his fate to die on a rainy day.

Rainy days *used* to be something positive for the two of them. Any time it would rain, William always went over to Phillip's house. They would play cards, or watch TV together, or occupy their time with whatever they could find. Sometimes they would just stare out the bedroom window at the pouring rain and share their dreams and ambitions.

William's anger was transferred to Phillip's mother. He felt that she had been the root of the problem by undermining Phillip's psyche with her "rain-crap," as he had been known to call it. Then his anger turned toward God. How could God have taken Phillip from him? How could this have happened to him? Phillip had such ambitions and good intentions in life. And now, all of the dreams and goals that they had discussed on those many rainy days of their youth had been washed away for Phillip.

William didn't feel completely right about having the funeral services in Portland, because Phillip had grown up in Texas and lived there all of his life. Phillip's parents hadn't moved to Oregon till he had graduated from high school and enrolled in college. William felt an injustice was being done to his friend. All of Phillip's friends were in Texas, and few could afford the trip for the funeral.

The church where the services

were held was small but very beautiful. The walls were covered with large and elaborate stained glass windows that shed different colored patches of light on the small congregation who had gathered to pay last respects to Phillip. There was a soft lull of organ music in the background throughout the ceremony.

When William stood up to speak before the small crowd, he stared out into the many faces he did not know. They were the faces of the friends Phillip's parents had met after moving to Portland. The people before him had never known the person whose body was lying lifeless in the casket below the podium. It disgusted him to see his best friend denied the company of the people he knew on this final occasion. However, part of him knew that the faces he then saw were there with good intentions. And, as he spoke, they were moved at the anecdotes he offered of his childhood with Phillip. They all cried with him as he concluded his oration in an emotional farewell to a good friend whose memory would live on for many ages to come.

The interment was held at the cemetery adjacent to the church directly following the service. For the most part, it was a sunshiny day. William had stood with a solemn face fixed hypnotically on a few distant rain clouds, as the pastor read passages from the Bible to comfort the mourning.

Long after all the black dressed gathering had left the site, William remained in his rental car to oversee the lowering of the coffin into the grave. He drove directly from the burial to the airport. All the sights and smells and all the sounds of that day were carved deeply into his memory.

When William returned to his apartment, he was still strongly grieving over his lost friend. He spent a few days lying about the apartment without much sleep. But, he eventually returned to work and tried to pick his life back up where he had left off.

Several days had passed before William had checked his mailbox. He hadn't tended to such things as taking out trash and getting mail for quite a while. And as he was walking back to the apartment, amidst all of the bills William found the letter from Phillip.

He stopped.

He stood there for a moment looking at the seven letters in the upper left corner. Phillip must've mailed it the Friday before he died.

William went inside to the desk that sat in front of the living room window. He sat there with the letter before him. At least 30 minutes had passed as he sat in a trance with his eyes fixed on the letter but seeing beyond it to a spaceless dimension of empty thought.

No.

He could not open it.

Instead, he opened the top drawer and slid Phillip's letter off of the desk onto the pile of letters already in the drawer, and he shut it quickly. Then William got up, and, after standing there a minute as if to be sure of his actions, he walked back into his bedroom. The bed was soft, and he was exhausted. He had hardly slept since the accident. With the letter in the drawer, he knew he would never get any sleep, but he forced himself to close his eyes.

William tried to get on with his life for several weeks. He felt that to read the letter would be an epilogue to their friendship, and that he could keep their friendship alive by not opening it and reading

it. The letter was a part of Phillip in William's eyes. If the letter were read, then the last bit of Phillip would die with it. At least, William saw it that way. So, it sat in the desk drawer haunting his every thought.

He would not open it—until now.

He sat there watching the two boys play in the harmless mist of rain outside his window. These boys weren't concerned with the grim complexities of life. All that mattered to them was the moment at hand. The first order of business for them was having fun. Somewhere a dog barked, and they were oblivious to the rest of the world. It didn't matter to them what the future held.

William reached down and took the envelope in one hand and a pair of scissors in the other. He quickly cut a small strip off of the end of the envelope and slid the letter out before he could change his mind. He slowly unfolded it and began to read:

August 2nd—12:15 am

WILL:

This has really been a pretty good week. In one sense it was typical. But, I knew I'd be driving down this weekend, so I had something to look forward to.

I just wanted to go ahead and drop you a line, even though I'll see you soon. I don't intend to mail this till right before I leave, so you shouldn't receive it till after this weekend.

Thanks for the postcard. I got it in the mail today.

Man, the weather here in Dallas sure is ridiculous. It has been raining almost all week long! Oh, well.

Hey, remember how you used to come over to my house when it rained. You knew my mom didn't want me leaving so you would come over to keep me company. It's kinda funny how we had

those talks about what we wanted out of life. It's kinda sad, too. God, I never knew life would be so hard.

I saw a quote by Shakespeare that made me think about our rainy days spent looking for entertainment:

*"When I was and a little tiny boy
With hey, ho, the wind and
the rain,*

A foolish thing was but a toy,

For the rain it raineth every day."

*I want to remind you that I will
always be here for you. But, I am sure
you know that. Just as I hope you will
always be there for me. Even though I
had to stay inside, I still looked forward
to those rainy days, cause we always
had so much fun together no matter
what we did.*

Will, I don't know if I ever told you

*or not, and it may sound silly to you,
. . . But, thank you for the rainy days.*

*Most crazily,
Phillip*

That night, William opened the
bedroom window before he got into
bed. The rain lulled him gently to
sleep.

It was a deep and peaceful sleep.

Rainy Days

by Dorte Holm Larsen

The rains fall in my memories,
grey foggy pictures
is what I recall,
but your face comes to me
like a ship fighting the rising sea.

Your features are blurry,
but your eyes shine
not brightly, but intensely.
The eyes I know so well,
they taught me to swim.

You were my source of strength,
showed me how to hold on,
believe, and NEVER give in.
You made the rain stop for hours;
I guard those shining spots.

I still remember those rainy days.
I didn't need them,
but who can stop the rain.
They will always be a part of me;
they and you helped me understand.

Walking in the Rain

by Erica L. Watson

I walked until my soul was drenched
From the bitter cold
Of the darkening sheet of rain,
So unfeeling, so very bold;
Not caring what its harshness might bring
To one so nearly drowned;
Not wondering about tomorrow
Or if peace can ever be found . . .
The rising sun
Will never be seen
If thunderclouds persist
To rain on all my dreams . . .
Help me find a rainbow
At the end of this horrid rain,
Before I suffer the fate
Of never loving again.

Tranquil Treasure

by Carol Maddox

Hidden on the back of the 86 acres where I presently live, deep in the pine-dotted woods, is a natural fresh-water spring that spills forth its bounty 365 days of the year. Here, many years ago, my dad and I would come after a tiring horseback ride to refresh ourselves and our steeds. Now, I come alone.

In the hush of a brand-new morning I walk noiselessly toward the spring on the time worn tractor ruts cushioned with fallen pine needles. The dense undergrowth amid the towering trees muffles sound that might intrude from the outside world. For the moment, the dawning sun sends welcoming rays filtering through the gently swaying branches of the varied trees. My nostrils are filled with the earthy

scent of rich dark humus and the leaf bed lying beneath the trees. I am acutely aware of the tranquilizing silence broken only by the early morning twittering of birds and the chirping of a lone tree frog. Before I realize how far I have come, the spring clearing is in front of me as if a huge door has been flung open.

Only God's touch can make a setting as perfect as this. Nestled between two steep earthen banks, the spring continuously bubbles, spilling over the edge of a cement tile into the sparkling creek. The chilled water is pure and has an ambrosial taste that quenches thirst as nothing else can. Just beyond the mouth of the spring there is a ridge in the earth where the water swirls,

splashing the delicate lime green ferns that decorate the steep slope stretching from the level ground to the creek. Looking across the water, I see the dried, hollow gourd that we used as a dipper. There is a pungent aroma about the gourd that, in its own strange way, makes the water seem even sweeter. For a fleeting moment, the smells, the sounds and the memories take me back to a wonderful, carefree and peaceful time.

Everything here, in this treasured, almost hallowed, place is the same except for the missing presence of a dear friend. I can almost hear him say, "Watch your foot, 'Pudd'! You might slip in."

Friends

by Sheryl Spivey

So many times filled with fun
Having the advantage of being young
Not knowing whether to come or go
But there is one thing I know

We are friends

All the good times mixed with some bad
We have been happy and we have been sad
I know that tomorrow we will grow
And we will have to prove to all and show

We are friends

I think you are beautiful and full of life
Wonderfully funny, that is what I like
I know we will be together for a long time
And there is one saying that is a favorite of mine

We are friends



OLD HOME PLACE by Trina Stiefer

Tortured Emotions

by Lois Ann Massey

Love and hate are feelings that are innate,
Desire is in our dreams of escape;
Silent passion leaves one incoherent,
But, hurt shows in our eyes quite apparent;
With needs to regress,
Leaves us with much to suppress;
Free-spirited will is like a semi-rolling wheel;
Nurture them well to avoid tortured emotions—
that leave us to our private hell!
Live never to deceive one's self,
By putting those tortured emotions on an ever
revolving shelf.
Honesty is circumspect,
Which in most is difficult to detect;
But, appreciated with utmost respect—
Like spring's first shower.

Memories of Grandmother

by Lora Robbins

On a cool day last November, I was devastated with the biggest shock of my life. My much loved grandmother had just died. At hearing *those words*, my immediate response was one of disbelief. That *my* grandmother could die was inconceivable.

My mind began to replay events and memories of shared moments with her. The pain to remember these things was very great, but I had no control over them. I could remember the earthy smell that was Grandmother's home during my childhood. I could almost touch the gardens of yesteryear that she had planted, nurtured and brought to *fruition* with the work of her own hands. And, finally, I could recall her as I had last seen her, sick, lying in a hospital bed, barely able to eat, yet still alive.

All of this and much more flooded my very soul within a matter of minutes. I could not grasp the finality of those hated words that had been spoken.

I remembered how Grandmother had loved life. She loved to go fishing. She never learned to drive, so she would wait expectantly for

someone to come around and carry her to her favorite fishing holes. She was one of the few persons I had ever seen who could fish from sunup to sundown and never be upset with the fact that she had not had as much as a nibble on her hook. Sometime late last spring, Grandmother's health had deteriorated enough that she knew she would never be sitting out on the banks of the creeks again with her fishing pole in hand.

My grandmother had lost her husband almost 20 years ago, but to hear her talk of him and his deeds and misdeeds, you'd have thought he had just run down to the nearby grocery store for some little something that Grandmother had run out of. Her love for Granddaddy never faded, and she made him seem so alive to me. She shared her memories of him with me, so that I could know him.

As the day came to say goodbye to Grandmother, I found myself reluctant to go. In a childish way, I hoped by not going, I could put off the realization that she was really gone. It was hard to accept the fact that I would never be going to visit

with her again, I would never see her warm smile, never again be able to touch her hand or hug her close to me for the rest of my life.

I finally went to the funeral, and listened to the beautiful words of life the preacher had to share with us. It comforted me to hear the words of the psalmist once again. In looking back now, I see that it was good to go to the funeral to tell Grandmother goodbye and to share my grief with all her family and friends who were also suffering.

After the funeral, I again began to think about all the little things that made up my grandmother. I slowly came to the realization that I can ponder these memories and many more, anytime or anywhere that I choose and be able to feel Grandmother close to me, encouraging me and guiding me in my life. I can savor her memory and pass her memories on to my children and grandchildren, so they, too, may know her. Her physical presence I will never see while I still live, but the strong and wonderful memories that she left me will keep her very much alive through many, many years to come.

A Familiar Path

by Erica L. Watson

We've walked this path before, you and I,
But the road has changed since then;
The naivete of that day is gone,
Never to return again . . .
We know of the burning curtain,
Wrought by heartbreak and pain,
Slowly disintegrating trust;
So similar to acid rain . . .
Since we've been apart
The road has flourished and grown,
But its beauty will not shine true
If you plot the course alone . . .
This uncertain road beckons
The slow caress of time
To illuminate and enhance;
To verbalize the mime . . .
The road is changing still,
And I love it all the more
Because I share it with you . . .
Yes, we've walked this path before.



GRANDMOTHER'S PORCH by Cynthia D. Price

Untitled

by Michael Sanders

In a tender, soft embrace,
I held you close to heart,
To shield you from the world,
Yet, we were forced apart.

I remember when,
We swam a shining lake.
The beloved times we shared,
At least they cannot take.

You are my only thought,
I know not what to do.
My sorrow will not end,
My soul is gone with you.

When the bitter winter comes,
And you find no place to hide,
Think of the love we had,
And warm yourself inside.

Let Me Follow You

by Connie Purtle

Living life
 in its shadows
I only know where I've been.
Reaching out
 to find something
To ease the pain deep within.

So tell me where do I go
And how will I get there
I need you here with me
To guide me like the blind.

Falling down
 in the valley
You were there to break my fall.
Giving me
 the power to fight it all.

Lead me on and I will follow
Together our dreams and hopes
One by one will come true
You just lead, and I'll follow you.

The Man

by David Nunn

The bum sits idle on the curb reflecting
on his austere life,
His missed opportunities,
Misunderstandings,
And misfortunes.

He rethinks on his existence, sensing his
demise will go unnoticed.

A tear runs down his tired face and falls on
his soiled coat.

The man raises his head and forces himself to smile.

Society says he has never amounted to anything.

But, he is a content man in a world of unsatisfied
souls.

Movement in the Night

by G. Paul Ray

And there is movement in the night
The dark skies echo a muffled shout
A shadow rises and walks about
Then spreads its wings in silent flight

And there is movement in the night
It feels the gravity pull it down
But breaks the bond of this small town
Ascending to a greater light

. . . And there is movement in the night

Time in Flight

by Lois Ann Massey

Humans take life at a fast pace,
Never considering if it is in good or bad taste;

Time is the element that waits on no man,
It does not slow down nor take you by the hand;
Lying and cheating—we play the game,
But, for most day after day it remains the same;
Slow down the pace, grow old with grace;
Lines and wrinkles are hard to erase;
Gravity has its time and place,
Be kind upon this face,
Age with grace not with haste.

What Tomorrow Brings

by Dwain E. Stroud

Life is full of pain and sorrow.
Why, I cannot tell.
Always fearing my tomorrows;
Not knowing what they'll spell.

Seeking for a lost emotion.
Maybe it will ease my pain.
I pray to God, who is my king,
For he, himself, had grief and pain.

"Help me, Lord."
I cry aloud,
"I need your love,
Please show me now."

And when I know he's shown the way,
I often go the other way.
Why, I never seem to know.
Maybe I'm afraid.

Afraid of what tomorrow brings;
I cannot tell you why.
If I could only trust the Lord,
I wouldn't have to cry.

"God, I know you're always here
With me everyday.
Help me, Lord, to see the way,
So I won't be afraid
Of what tomorrow brings."

The Sea

by John David Feagin

Life is like a boat on the sea.
Set well your course on a clear day,
For countless dangers may lie in your way.
So, plot carefully your course across the sea.

For the day may be clear,
Yes, beautiful and bright,
But the sea's a mighty foe to fear,
Though you fight her with all of your might.

When all seems calm,
And you feel your storm is over,
Just remember,
It is in the eye of the hurricane
That the sea is most calm.

The sea has many treasures
Buried deep within her depths,
But her precious treasures
Are her many victims
Lying silently at rest.

Why is this so? It seems so wrong,
That nature would sing such a deadly doleful song.
But, when she sings with wrath man can not measure,
She also uncovers many a past buried treasure.

A storm is a sailor's nightmare,
But high waves a surfer's dream.
The sea's treasures lie ever there,
Waiting for wise and fortunate men to glean.

Make sure your course is forever well plotted,
Or else, from this life your name may be blotted,
For at many, opportunity does wink,
But storms can cause your boat to sink.

Reflective Thoughts of a Middle Aged Woman

by Mary Chartiér

The middle aged lady huddled around the wood-burning stove. "It's a bit chilly. I'll place a blanket over my shoulders if I stay cold." She liked that old stove. She could sit there many minutes and review her life span of only five decades and enjoy those moments. After all, she learned that time itself is only little particles of nothing. Within those time particles she could sort

the good from the sadder events and choose her emotional elements for the day. "Today," she mused. "I'll pick the good."

Remembering the old mid-western farmhouse where she grew up was easy. During the winter, she and her parents and seven brothers and sisters would huddle around a wood burning stove, its potbelly proboscis exuding warmth for the

anterior parts of bodies that chose to turn its way. Only the backsides were chilled. Dad would intermittently shovel more coal into that hungry stove that kept burping soot into the pipes and occasional smoke into the living room.

As a little girl, she foraged with her brothers in the fields, small creeks and culverts. The temperature of the day would easily change

from warm sunshine out on the terrain; once they climbed through the stone culvert, the cooler degrees made themselves apparent. Counting the number of gargantuan green bullfrogs and an occasional surface catfish made such an exciting world! And, oh . . . the day they found an exquisitely beautiful flowered vase! It had a smooth shiny yellow body and various pasteled flowers near its mouth. Only a couple of chips and cracks—they hurriedly carried it home to “Mama” who instantly

agreed that it was the most beautiful vase she had ever seen. She kept that vase for many years behind a glass cupboard door so that visitors could admire its beauty.

“My mind jumps from past to present,” her thoughts reminded her. She smiled while looking at the old hand saws above the stove. “You remember how you retrieved those from the deserted ditch?”

This time her thoughts were interrupted by high pitched voices from little people who shouted

“Hi, Grandma!” and chubby little hands reached upward for a hug and smile. “Tell us a story!” one of them squealed. “Oh, yes,” emphasized a little girl who looked just as her image, “Tell us a good story!”

“Why, certainly!” the middle aged lady responded. “Today I’ll tell you about your great-grandparents. If you sit close to the stove, the story will sound better.” Her thoughts twinkled as her thoughts cast over the old room’s memorabilia.



Small Shoes

by Tamrah Southwell

There used to be
tiny shoes
Scattered over the
living room.
Little socks for
little feet,
Covering tiny toes
so sweet.
Those small feet
Oh, how they've grown!
Thinking back—
the years have flown.
Each time I look
those shoes are there—
Scattered over everywhere.
Oh, for now
they are still small—
But that will change
before too long.
They grow too fast
Those tiny feet
Just thinking of it
makes me weep.
So for now
I'll just enjoy
The scattered shoes
of two little boys,
Keeping those memories
in my heart—
Oh, priceless treasures
never depart!
Little feet and tiny toes
To each his own—
I'll take those.



OUR BABY by Brenda Jordan

A Future Prospective

by Patsy Fowzer

A remembrance of yesterday intertwines my thoughts. I have no great legacy of wealth; instead, I bequeath to my sons an appreciation of life. Don't just exist; you need to make each day count. Material possessions are fleeting, but family and friends will last forever. A priceless hug, loving kiss or a gentle caress make a meaningful life.

I do question God's wisdom in bestowing three boisterous boys and an alcoholic husband upon me. Cascading feelings: sadness—

unlimited happiness, exasperation—joy, mental exhaustion—soaring pride. All three are fine looking boys, an unbiased mother's opinion.

Gary, my first born, had a bit stormy adolescence. A carefree attitude and independence generate his fulfilling life. He finds happiness in helping others. Gary has seasoned feelings for his age, and he is a positive influence upon his younger brothers.

David, 18 years old, is not into drugs or alcohol. Body building

and natural foods are his thing. He's still looking for an easy way, but he is finding hard work has rewards of its own.

Steven is an impressionable 10 year old, looking for self-satisfaction in possessions: my bike, my room, my way or no way. What can you do for me?

Hopefully, all three will find their happiness and have a remembrance of a mother who truly loved them.

Tomorrow's Dream

by Donna Dené
Kimbrell

Today is today and
never tomorrow,
tonight is near
and tomorrow is arriving
but it is never here.

I dream for the days
gone by,
and all that will be.

I dream for tomorrow
yet never today.

I know tomorrow never
comes so why am I
still dreaming for
tomorrow and not
dreaming for today.

Race Day: The Prospect of Winning

by Meredith L. Watters

The moment of truth has arrived. The training has been on a daily basis in preparation for the one short minute which will determine the future of one horse. Will his future be filled with glamour, prize money and bright, orange carrots sliced into his evening feed, or will discontentment fill the air? He begins to anticipate the time when he is called to the paddock to be saddled, then galloped slowly to the gates, where, once he is standing still, the latch will be sprung and the victor soon determined.

"Bring your horses to the paddock for the ninth race." It is the feature race of the day for which he has been carefully, almost methodically prepared. Training, grooming and childlike care have been poured into readying this massive muscle and bone structure for this day.

The tension begins to build as he is removed from his stall and led toward the saddling paddock. As he notices the competitors from the last race, his blood stirs and his

heart rate rises.

Entering the walking ring, he becomes inspired by the huge crowd gathered at the railing, their voices clamoring. As he is saddled, a shallow nicker flows from his nostrils. He waits with anticipation for a reply, eyes wide and ears standing straight. Soon, the jockey mounts and he is led onto the track. Slowly, he is warmed-up, then led to the gates.

Although the day is cool, sweat begins to cover his massive body, accentuating his fine muscle tone, and darkening his red coat of short hair. He is alert, aware of his opposition, all of whom are vying for the same coveted prize.

As he circles behind the large, green gates, he notices the loud clang of metal doors closing behind an entering horse. Suddenly, he is inside a short, narrow corridor, shifting his weight from side to side, then finally setting his feet for the spring forward. Noses pointed forward, heads up, the starter is satisfied. He presses the small, black button and "They're off!"

His muscles flex as the toes of his shoes dig into the dirt, leaving a shallow trench when his feet move ahead, reaching for the next step. He has sprung from the gates, raising the jockey on his back to a seated position.

His power and momentum are now thrust forward with great speed and agility. His feet, moving in a steady rhythm, one, two, three, four, are pounding the earth as the sound of a drum. His head rocks up and down as his slim, almost fragile looking legs stride forward, stretching and reaching. He runs with all his heart and soul, determined to stretch farther, run faster and outlast his opponents.

And he crosses beneath the wire, he feels a sense of relief and his pace begins to slow. He holds his head high with great pride, for he has accomplished his goal. He is the victor! Thus, his work is done for one day, and the prize is his to enjoy. But, it shall not last for long, for there is always another moment of truth to be faced, another race to be run.

mental ballet:
an anthology of observa-
tions made on the beach
while eating yogurt.

by darrin a. lamorte

in front:

struggling waves
climb the beach in search of land.
with grippless arms
and wasted dreams.
sliding back to the ocean
crying indiscernable tears
and losing all identity.

above:

carnivores soar
in concentric circles
as they focus
and die
scarring the air in invisible grooves
in the shape of ice cream at carvel.

behind:

in a metal box
two people of the opposite sex sit.
and think
the music pushes from behind
forcing their numb bodies against each other
as they congeal in an amorphous mass
of flesh and smoke.
temporarily—
they disappear.

beneath:

somewhere in tibet
a wife reaches out
and smacks her husband
for hogging all the covers.

me:

here i sit
in the epicenter of this gigantic comic donut.
with no sides.
a mist of discomfort stings my eyes
as i realize that they're all waiting
for the right moment
to collapse on me
and steal my yogurt.
uncontrollably
my fear overtakes me
and i divide up my yogurt
in four equal parts on the sand.
casually,
i get up and reach for my car keys.

Have I Got a Deal for You

by Patsy Fowzer

We invest years in education for specialized fields, then wait by chance to meet Mr. Right. Perhaps, old-fashioned courtship is a better method; still, subconsciously we carry a shopping list of characteristics. As we talk with a potential mate, we compare him to our list. You may say, "This guy's a jerk" or "Wow, what a hunk." Why not a dating game in which you can have your pick of any car on the lot? Choose carefully; you don't want to end up with a clunker.

Should you buy a brand spanking new compact sportscar when you can drive a good used, dependable, comfortable Cadillac model? Available today, we have a sportscar model—young, egotistical, self-centered jerk. He sits there tooting his horn, revving engine, spinning wheels and getting nowhere in a hurry. Straight from

the factory, you may get a lemon or a peach. As the newness wears off this smooth sleek body, true love can endure or vanish with the dawn. The sporty model, quite frankly, is a legend in his own mind, and frequently is stolen away by a frivolous model less attractive than its legal owner.

Picture instead an older, previously owned, quality Cadillac, available with clear title. With necessary attention, dents and scratches can be soothed away; loving care mixed with a much needed tune-up will quiet those knocks and pings. I admit a period of test driving is needed to prove this model's flexibility under adverse conditions. You can take possession, complete with promise of years of dependable and faithful service; however, it does not come with a money back guarantee, not

even a 50,000 mile warranty against breakdowns. After all, it has endured some wear and tear. This unique, priceless possession can bring you joy beyond your wildest expectations.

I have had a lot of fender benders and crashes, test driving all makes and models.

After six years of shopping around, incidentally, I now drive a 1930 Cadillac and wouldn't trade him for two red sportscars.

To sum it up, the choice is yours. Thus, this is an important investment for your future happiness. If you have an adventurous nature, a fancy, exciting sportscar will suit you, but in my opinion, a trustworthy Cadillac is your best value. The highway of life is rough enough with good transportation, for we never know what's around the next bend.

The Perfect Life

by Linda Abel

The following City Ordinance is published by City News as a public service.

In this year of 2020, we, the honorable and concerned members of the City Council, hereby pass this ordinance:

Whereas, sweets is the single largest preventable cause of fatness, premature death and disability in the United States and

Whereas, sweets are addictive and

Whereas, 40% of the adult population is overweight and

Whereas, 2 out of 5 children are overweight and

Whereas, many sweets contain caffeine, a cancer-causing agent and

Whereas, sweets contain sugar, a cancer-causing agent and

Whereas, manufacturers must use more natural resources to make clothing for overweight people and

Whereas, overweight people are unsightly and

Whereas, overweight people require more space in public

transportation (elevators, buses, trains and airplanes)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED THAT THERE WILL BE NO SWEETS SOLD OR USED IN PUBLIC PLACES.

ANY Person who violates any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be fined to run one-fourth mile for each calorie consumed for first offense, one-half mile for each calorie consumed for second offense and one mile for each calorie consumed for third offense and for each conviction thereafter.

Susan folded the six-month-old newspaper and laid it on the coffee table. She had kept this issue as a reminder of time past.

It all started in the late 1980s with "no smoking in public places" ordinances. Who would have believed that in a span of 32 years things would be so changed.

Back in the 80s people didn't give much thought to protecting freedom by honoring other's rights. The majority were swept up in the flow of the times. Groups like the Moral Majority, Ranks Against Tolerance (RAT), Information Rights Klan (IRK) and others became the rage. Self-appointed groups and individuals spread the gospel, "I know what's best for you."

It began innocently enough with editing school books. Then came smoking policies, the repeal of Roe vs. Wade abortion case, mandated drug testing and lie detector testing. All were policies to keep the American society on the straight and narrow. America was to be the world example of a moral society.

Susan walked to her bedroom and dug out her favorite records from the far corner of her closet. "I could make a fortune selling this collection on the black market," she was thinking. "Most of these records had been banned for more than 20 years. Just another case of what's best for society."

As she stretched out on the couch listening to her favorite rock group, she recalled her day.

She had puffed into the BAD machine in order to start her car. The Breath Analysis Device was mandatory in all cars. Upon arrival at work, another breath test by the SLIME detector. The Smoke-Liquor Internal Machine Evaluator had been in use for five years. It was very accurate and could detect alcohol consumed the night before or a cigarette smoked on the way to work. If found guilty, a person

would automatically be fired and reported to the proper authorities.

All alcohol and tobacco products had been outlawed 10 years ago, but individuals could purchase these items on the black market. It was risky business dealing in black market items, and Susan was afraid to try.

During her break, Susan ate a candy bar and flushed the wrapper down the toilet. "No running for me," she said as she smiled at the thought of remaining undetected.

After work, Susan ate dinner with Toni at a local restaurant. They presented their SLOBB cards to the waitress. The Select Lunch For Only Body Beautiful cards were color coded: white for the underweight, green for perfect weight and red for overweight. The waitress then issued menus according to card color. This year-old law was to help control people's weight and promote health.

"We should have eaten at my place," Toni had said. "I hate these red cards!"

Susan flicked on the TV to watch the late news. "It would be nice to hear the real news," she thought. "I can still remember the days when the public knew everything . . . from government scams to protests at city hall." CANCER agency now controlled TV, radio and newspapers. The Censor Academy of News Control and Education Ratings had controlled the media for many years.

Susan carefully returned her records to their hiding place and crawled into bed. She was remembering one of her favorite plays, "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare. It, too, had been banned by the censors. Hamlet's famous quote "To be, or not to be," kept tumbling over and over in her mind.

As she lay thinking, it suddenly occurred to her that in less than three months the DEATH machine would be installed in her bedroom.

Dream Editing And Thought Halting machines were being installed nationwide.

"Now, that had been a controversial bill!" she thought. But like all the others, it had passed Congress and become law. The gist of the bill was to protect individuals against themselves. It was best for people not to think while waiting to fall to sleep. "A controlled mind is a healthy mind" was the slogan of the DEATH organization that sponsored the bill. DEATH also said that dreams should be eradicated. Dreams were dangerous, unhealthy and caused anxiety.

"I have less than three months to think about Shakespeare, Twain, my childhood memories or anything else," Susan thought. "Well, at least I can remember . . . I can think . . . I can dream until then."

"I'm living in the perfect society," Susan said. "It was mandated by the majority. There are no drugs, liquor or cigarettes. My diet is controlled to protect my health. TV, radio and newspapers have been cleaned up. Only the perfect music, movies and books are available for my enjoyment. I'll soon be protected from my own thoughts and dreams. So why am I unhappy?" she asked. "Why?"

As Susan searched for the answer, she eventually drifted off to sleep. In her dreams you could hear her mind whispering:

"To be, or not to be: that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;

... To sleep: perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come."

Look at me! I feel it!

by Anna Argemi' Carson

Look at me!
I'm dying from the inside out.
I feel it!
In the depth of my womb
Pulling towards the ground
My soaring needs
Entwined by vines
From earth's core.

Look at me!
Slippery as the snake with new skin.
I feel it!
Another season
To crumble more purity
A higher ability
To shed and to wish
For wings.

New Seeds

by Linda Abel

My brain is tired and my spirit worn thin,
It's the same old thing, day out, day in.
There's numbness in my thoughts and a burning pain
in my gut,
What to do to change this rut?
Too bad I can't pack my bags and move out
of my mind,
Turn my back on it all . . . just walk away in time.
Let someone else straighten out this mess,
My mind needs fresh soil and seeds to plant new
thoughts, I must confess.
Then sit back and watch the seedlings as they grow,
Add water, pull weeds and give loving care just so.
But I don't have anyone to rescue me,
To pack my bags and set me free.
So I guess it's up to me to plant the seeds, add the
water and pull the weeds.
Yes, it's up to me to plant new seeds.

Dogwood

by John David Feagin

There you stand
All shaded by the sun,
A symbol so grand,
That of God's only son.

Each petal bears the mark
Of nail wounds so dark
And red streaks declare
That his blood was shed there.

Your centers adorn
With his crown of thorns
Which he patiently has worn
Despite the crowd's scorns.

Your flower bears the form of the cross
Heralding that day of such tragic loss.
To all his beloved who watched him
'Twas a day so very dark and dim.

Then bitterly you cried
And shed many a tear,
For upon you he died
The one God held so very dear.

Once you towered as other trees,
But God, in his mercy, put you at ease
And made you smaller than the other trees
Now you're at ease, leaves in the cool breeze.

No longer of you
Shall man a deadly cross construe
For you are short, twisted and bent,
A symbol of clothes, torn and rent.

Yes, in the spring air,
You truly declare
That he once hung there,
For all people everywhere.

He alone was that one sacrifice
That for all sin can ever suffice.
And put an end to life's brevity
That we may have eternal longevity.

As your flowers do all eyes appease,
All nature looks upon you,
Shaded by the other trees,
Drinking from the morning dew.

Stars that through the night
Shine forth the season's passage
Thrill astronomers.

by James F. Barnes

Anticipating
Spring's posh designer perfume
Pink-starred hyacinths.

by Carolyn Hendon

Arising in light
Daylilies bring joy to days
And die in the night.

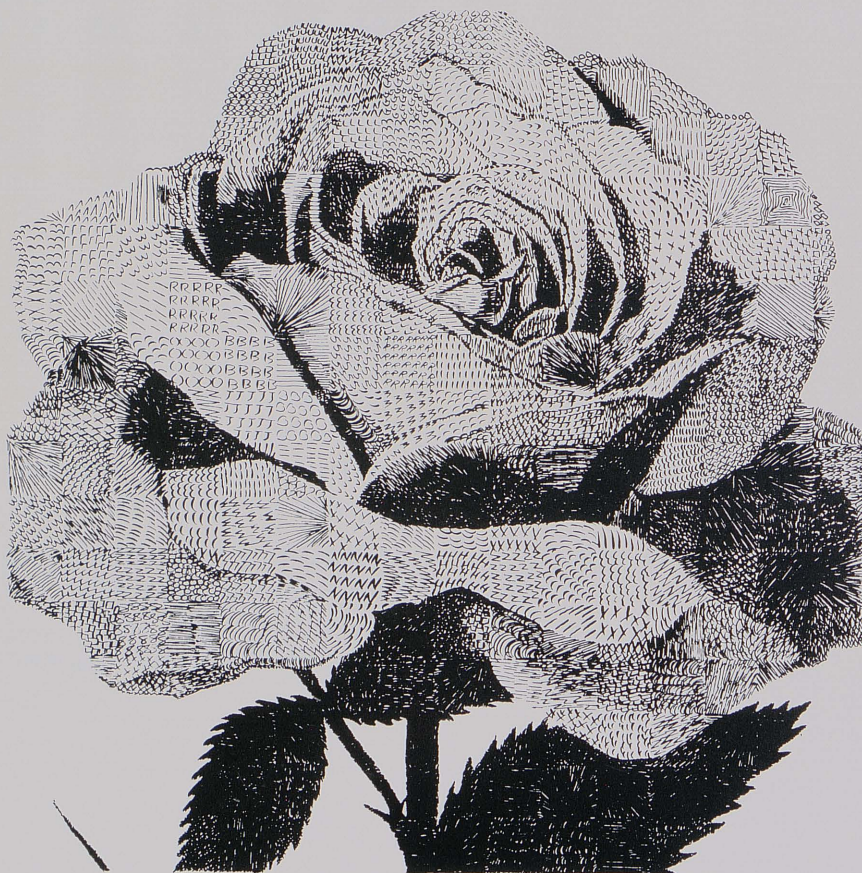
by Julie Stephens

The autumn leaves fall
Making me a shield to hide
Life's reality.

by Kristin Nelson

Winter sheds her skin
Promises renew again
Buds of hope spring forth.

by Lynda Brownlee



ROSE by Angela Britt

Ode to Shakespeare

by Catherine L. Starkey

Right from day one, it was a chore.
If I knew then what was in store,
I might not now be here, you see;
Nor comprehend your thou and thee.

What purpose to your 'standard-bearer'?
To me, 'twas neither here nor there-a.
But on I searched through Webster's diction
Whil'st wishing we'd get back to fiction.

Fraught I was with hesitation,
When lo, I found an explication.
The purpose of your curious twang
Came alive, came clear, almost sang!

And so, with time amid confusion,
I came at last to this conclusion.
I'm glad that Byrum pursued the quest
And I hope you know it's all in jest.
For time well-spent, this I do allow—
I knew ye not; I know you now.

Coming of Age

by Johnny E. Rush

Becoming a man is judged by different standards if you come from East Texas. For me it was the ability to deer hunt alone. Years of preparation had gone into my training in the art of hunting. From age eight I had been taken on hunting trips, leaving before daylight, sitting for hours in the cold and rain, being still and silent for what seemed an eternity.

Now at age 13 I was ready. Weeks ahead of time I had walked these woods and found this crossing, constructing the stand I sat in with great care. For this was a test of my manhood, the ability to take the life of one of God's creatures, a long standing tradition in my family. Arriving before daylight I had climbed to my stand and sat upon my single seat in hopes that today I would sit among the men and tell of the ease with which I had forever stilled the beating of a heart.

As the first rays of light cast their shadows upon the forest, the

serenity of the woodland was shattered by the sound of a shot. So the honor of first blood was not to be mine. No matter, for it was here that the big buck of the forest dwelled. His territorial scrape lay only 50 yards away, and no less than three rubs were within range of my gun. Today his life blood would flow and I would be a man.

The forest at my feet was white from frost and the cold had numbed my hands and feet until they ached. My clothes had a covering of frost in spots. Though I sat silent and still, I longed to move. Yet I would not be cheated by my weakness. I would endure the cold today, to sit as a man tonight.

A crackling of leaves drew my attention to my left. Standing in the shadows was the buck's harem, five does made nervous by the recent shot. My eyes strained to see his shape among the trees and yet I almost missed his breath as it turned to fog where he stood hiding

from these aliens who had dared invade his domain. His harem crossed before me and he lunged from hiding and it seemed he would surely rush past me before I could fire. But in the middle of the clearing he paused and, raising his regal head, snorted in what could only be contempt and turned to survey his domain.

The long-awaited moment was at hand. Bringing my rifle to bear, I placed his heart in my sights. Perhaps it was only my imagination, but he turned his head to look at me and my grip upon the trigger slackened. In this moment I felt a kinship with this deer, lowered my rifle and watched him trot into the recess of the forest.

Since that day I have hunted and killed many deer and sat and told tales of my prowess as a hunter and a man, but I still remember with fondness my first hunt. For on that day I became a man, not by taking life but by allowing life to continue.

Guilty by Association

by Catherine L. Starkey

It is not only his thirty-sixth birthday, it is also two years exactly since he was laid off from Midstate Motors. In the dark of his dingy basement room, where he lives rent-free in exchange for odd jobs, Stanley Downey toys with a can of beer as his mind contrasts his life before this two-year-old nightmare began.

Then, his neat cape cod held his whole world. Dory, his wife, was a clever housekeeper; her sewing and taste for a bargain gave their home a richer look than his salary provided. His son Drew and daughter Anna were a joy, even during the turbulent teen years, . . . but, that world was wiped away by divorce.

In desperation, tomorrow he will join two bar buddies in a sure-fire burglary. With his split, he will depart this hole in the ground for another continent to start anew.

Life has doled him a rotten deal, so he doesn't care that he will take from the rich man they will rob tomorrow. He muses such things to himself, as if in justification. Before the beer is finished, Stan is in a deep sleep and too quickly, tomorrow has dawned for him.

The job is not until after 9 p.m., so he will spend the day at the pub on the corner, where the huge wide

angle screen doesn't need adjustment every 20 minutes and can be viewed from any spot in the bar.

At 5:30, he is startled to see Drew rushing toward him. "Please Dad, you've got to help me!" he pleads. Stan wraps his arm protectively around his shoulder and tries quietly but quickly to slip him out. When outside, he urges Drew to speak up. "What is it?", he almost shakes the boy.

"In school today, Louis Feldotti was accused of selling drugs and since my locker was the only one unlocked, he stashed the stuff in mine, until the search was over. When basketball practice ended, I reached for my towel and not knowing what this bag was, I stupidly called aloud, "Whose is this?", as my sweaty prints covered the package.

"The coach knew Louie and I were teammates, but didn't know I never saw him other than on the court. I didn't associate with his crowd at all, but they are pairing us and think I am guilty too," he cried.

"They have had Louie under watch since the school year began, and now they have the evidence. They don't believe me, but Dad," he continued, "if I were guilty,

would I have made a loud scene with the goods in my hands?"

Sick inside for his son, Stan sobered up very quickly. He still had a friend, a law student named Soloman Helpert, to whom they rushed for advice. After much debating and many phone calls, Sol assured Drew that the problem was resolved. It was 9:45 when the lawyer rose to bid them good-bye.

Relieved, each went his own way and once again, Stan fell into a deep sleep . . . having lost his last chance to escape to a new start elsewhere, but consoled at the thought of having helped his boy.

The next day, just before noon, as Stan strolled toward the high school playground, he picked up the *Cadillac Courier*, screaming with headlines: GROSSE POINTE RETIREE MURDERED.

Frantically, he flipped the pages to learn of the arrest of his bar buddies. His blood ran cold, as he continued walking.

Just then, Drew saw him and, with arms outstretched, raced toward him, loudly proclaiming, "Dad, you saved my life last night! . . .

As they embraced, his father murmured softly, "No, Drew, YOU saved mine."

Beyond the Door

by Erica L. Watson

Locked behind a cold steel door,
Dreams and aspirations confined . . .
Creativity and talents are wound tight,
Waiting to be stretched and defined.

Knowledge, reason, answers
Await a daring thrust . . .
To breathlessly reach beyond
That which we know and trust.

Imagination and rumors make futile attempts
To turn steel to transparency . . .
Dreamers dream and realists strive
To determine what is soon to be.

Yet, the cold grayness, a longstanding impasse
Weakens as the future dawns . . .
Remember the past, treasure the present
But push through and let life go on.

Timeless

by Tamrah Southwell

Tomorrow
So far away
Never quite near enough.

Yesterday
So far away
A shadow in today's light.

And
Now is now
Soon to be then.

After that
The words change
To if and when.

Suddenly the future
Is here
The past is gone.

You know—
The present never seems
To stay very long.

Turn Another Page

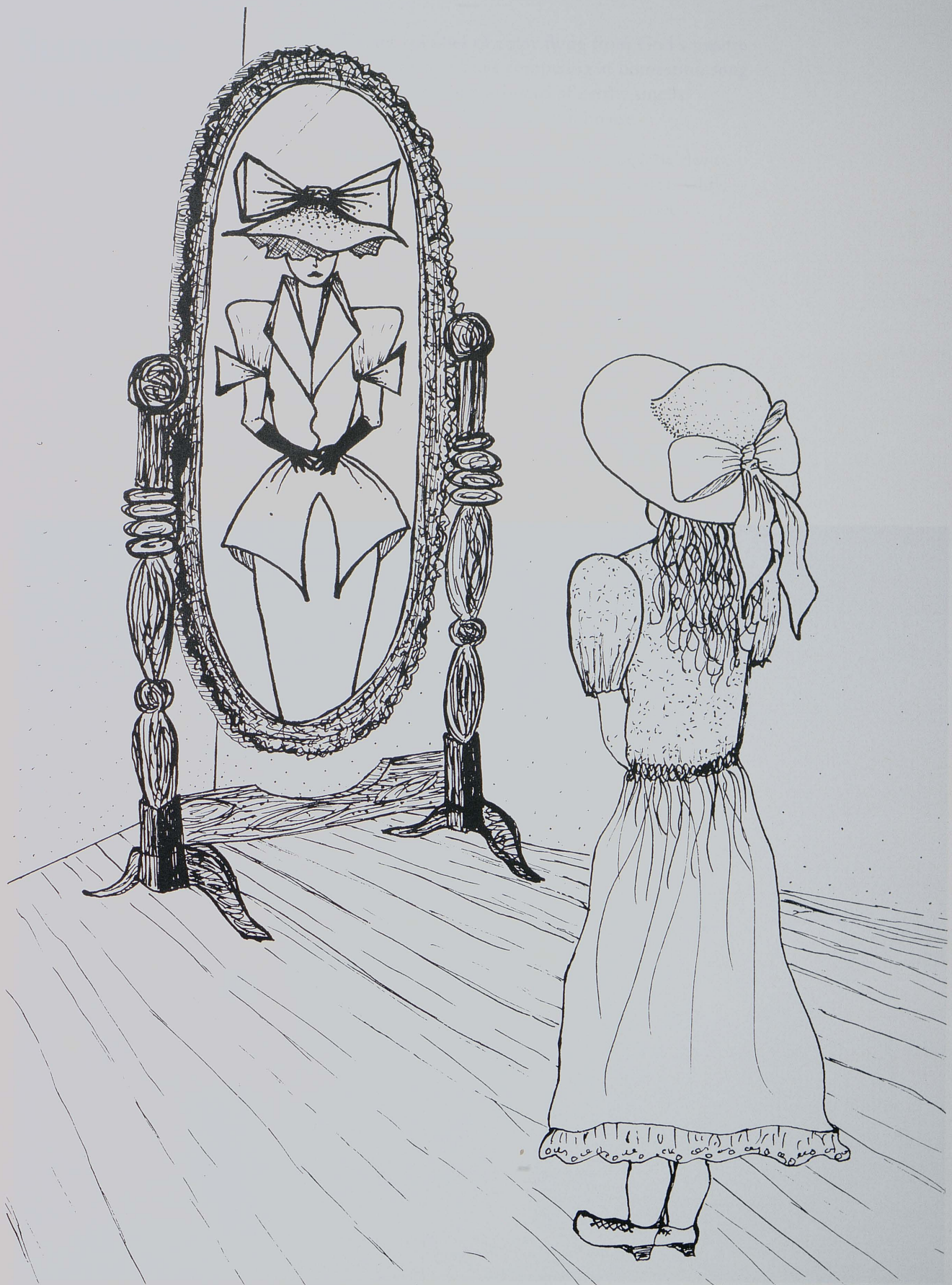
by Heath Huffstetter

Poor lost, little girl
Never knowing which way to turn
Wanting all that life has to give,
Trying to love, trying to learn.

Your life has become such a wreck,
Your world so unsure.
You are dreaming of that special something—
Something golden, something pure.

So you ran away to find it
Thinking it was the only way.
Not thinking of the consequences
And the price you'd have to pay.

Your life is like a Broadway play.
Now, as the curtains close at intermission,
You must step down from the stage
And, with tears in your eyes, turn another page.



WHEN I LOOK TO THE FUTURE *by Stacy Pinson*

Parched desert veins
crackle as they strain
toward the cactus droplet.

by Catherine L. Starkey



MESA VERDE by Charles Sowers

Summer Sunset

by Judy Barnes

Vibrant splashes of color flung from God's palette
Birds and bugs competing at homespun song
A smorgasboard of earthy smells
The tickle of a breeze.

The day limps to history. Future races the dawn.
Each tumbling into life's perspective, while—
Time awaits the summer sunset
Tranquil, enduring, calm.

Egypt: Ancient and Eternal

by Charline Wallis

From the primeval mound, with life itself,
There emerged a thread in this narrow valley
Which carried its one eternal facet,
Inescapable, from that dark and hazy past
To infinity beyond the imagined future's eye.
We see that aspect from the plane—growth or death!
The green stops sharply, cleanly, and sand begins,
Within the rocky folding hills of which
Another proof exists—in cradled ancient seeds:
Small pods, with crumbling limestone walls
Where fading colors beckon the eye's caress
Along the sinuous swells of remaining relief.
They offer truth which outlasts pictured rites.
Battle Set and soar with Osiris!
—The two are twined and twined.
Balance the feather with the heart!
Sun's rays are juxtaposed with night!
This evening, the Arab crouches by his fire,
Lit by the glowing Re-Atum, but
Darkly shadowed by his plight.
Eternal Egypt? It exists, but not in monuments
Disintegrating by time and outstretched palms.
Enduring only, as the eternal thread of Egypt,
Is the union of polarity.
Black land, red land . . .

fertility . . . eternity . . .

Dichotomy

Windmills of the Past

by Pamela Calvert

As I walked through the beautiful green countryside, I stopped and gazed up at the huge windmill before me. I stood hypnotized by its clicking and turning. As I stood watching, it brought back memories of my childhood. I remembered lazy days of summer, lying on my back in a flowery bed of green and yellow, gazing up at the clouds as they passed over the windmill.

I recalled the time my sister and I tried to climb the windmill, only

to end in defeat and fear before we could reach the top.

We had always been enchanted by the way it turned as if by some magical force. As the wind grew stronger, it turned faster and faster. We loved lying on our backs watching it turn and talking about all the things sisters like to talk about. We often talked until sunset about what we would do when we grew up, boys, getting married and having kids. We talked about things that made us happy, like our

first kiss, or things that hurt us, like breaking up with someone, or feeling out of place, as if we didn't belong.

When our talks were over, we always felt closer and at peace with ourselves and the world. I couldn't help having that same peaceful feeling now as I looked up at the windmill one more time and turned to go, remembering the past, realizing how fast time passes; just as the blades of the windmill turn, so do the times of our lives.

Stars of Life

by Dwain E. Stroud

I once was looking to the sky
Watching my stars of life pass by.
"God, oh God, please tell me why
You let my stars of life pass by?"

Then my God did say to me,
"My precious lamb, why can't you see?
Those aren't your stars of life you see;
Those are your sins thrown out by me."

Crystalline

by Connie Purtle

Walk lightly, breathe softly
Lest you upset the delicate balance
Of my crystalline world.

A world of glass houses
Sitting on the hill,
Patiently awaiting my return.

Crystalline . . .
Everything fine and pure.

As the sun sends down its gold
Illumine me through my soul.
Crystalline.

The glow fills my world
The brightness of a hundred stars
Shine . . . all is crystalline.

Think About It

by Sheryl Spivey

The world as we know it.
Creator and creation brought the world upon us.
Will it last?
Has it a chance of survival amongst the crossroads
of mankind?
Corruption, pollution, and immoral beings
are concerns.
Negative and positive reactions will erupt if concern
is abandoned.
Fight for a better world and let all creatures venture
to full potential.
Strike not to harm but communicate and compromise.
We are all a part of the same world.
Life will persist and contributions will be recognized.

The Continuity of Change

by Betty J. Hobbs

My childhood and adolescence contained many changes of a frightening nature in addition to the normal changes which occur in a child's life. During these years my dad developed health problems and was in the hospital much of the time, which added to my loneliness and fears.

I was an only child, shy and sensitive, and my mother was the one stabilizing strength in the midst of my continually changing world.

When I was 13, my dad passed away.

Because of the numerous unhappy changes during my early years, I became an adult who was afraid of change and looked upon it with dread. As my adult years began to pass, there was a basic uniformity in my life which was of great comfort to me. I settled happily into adulthood and was grateful for the sameness of the days and years. Complacency filled my heart and mind, and I expected the remainder of my life to be contented and free of extreme changes.

This was not to be, as dynamic changes in my life were only beginning. My husband of many

years died, and I was left alone to rear our young son. The overwhelming grief and fears associated with this change in my life were with me a long time. I was even more firmly convinced changes were to be feared and avoided if at all possible.

The restoration of my life was a long and painstaking process. Along the way, there was a remarriage and a divorce to reinforce my idea of the undesirability of changes in life. I entered the business profession and began to construct a career for myself. After attaining nine years of service and becoming the office manager, my hours were reduced from 40 to 20 per week. I was devastated at this sudden and unwelcome new event. Once again change had taken control of my life.

After much bewilderment and contemplation, I arrived at the conclusion to control events and conquer my lifelong fear of change. I enrolled at Tyler Junior College and soon realized I wanted to become a teacher. The desire to help young children learn skills necessary to have a good future life, and a fervent hope to be able to lessen some of the overwhelming

changes associated with school and the learning process are the most compelling reasons for my decision to teach elementary school. The possibility of accomplishing these goals fills me with a warm satisfaction. I know teaching is where I belong in life.

As I stand at this point in time and look backward at my life and at all of the many changes and fears of them, I realize there was a continuity, as of a thread being woven through my life. The changes I have experienced have created in me a strength and determination I could not possibly have attained without the confidence and knowledge gained by the conquering of these events.

True, not all changes in life are good, but they are sometimes unavoidable. Many changes are both necessary and rewarding. Life is filled with changes for all of us. They are inevitable. The important thing to remember is our attitude toward them can cause a positive or a negative reaction in ourselves. There is a continuity in our lives, and changes are only steps taken toward the fulfillment of our ultimate destiny.

The Little Secret

by Dorte Holm Larsen

Look out for tomorrow,
reach back for yesterday,
use the visions,
and the lessons
to shape and live
for today.

Untitled

by David Nunn

The sun goes down in one part
Of the world and night takes
Over like eight hours of death.
All the beautiful sights and sounds
Are obliterated from our eyes and our
Ears, which happens in death, but,
There is one thing we do not realize
At this time of morning.

The sun is coming up in
Another part of the world.



EPCOT by Charles Sowders

